

Duhok University

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“ Linking Verbs ”



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Linking verbs

Linking verbs don't function in the same way as typical verbs in showing action, so it can sometimes be tricky to recognize them. Review a list of linking verbs so you will be able to recognize words that always function as this type of verb and those that can serve as either linking or action verbs.



What Are Linking Verbs?

Linking verbs are sometimes described as performing the function of an equal sign because they provide the connection between the subject of a sentence and a certain state. **This type of verb:**

- shows a relationship between the subject and the sentence complement, the part of the sentence following the verb
- connects or links the subject with more information — words that further identify or describe the subject
- identifies a relationship or existing condition
- Linking verbs can be referred to as copulas or copular verbs.

Words That Are True Linking Verbs

Some words are always linking verbs. These are considered "true" linking verbs. They do not describe the action, but always connect the subject to additional information. The most common true linking verbs are forms of "to be," "to become" and "to seem."

1- Basic Forms of "to Be"

The many forms of to be are linking verbs.

am	am being
is	is being
are	are being
was	were
has	have been
will have been	had been
shall	shall be
shall have been	should
should be	should have been
might	might be
might have been	could
could be	may
may be	may have been
must be	must have been

2- Forms of "to Become"

The various forms of to become are linking verbs.

become	becomes
became	has become
have become	had become
will become	will have become

3- Forms of "to Seem"

Forms of to seem also function as linking verbs.

seemed	seeming
seems	has seemed
have seemed	had seemed

Examples of True Linking Verbs in Sentences

- Any time you see the words or phrases above, you know they are performing a linking or connective function in showing a relationship or describing a state.
- I am glad
- it is Friday. - Here the linking verb "am" connects the subject (I) to the state of being glad.
- Laura is excited about her new bike. - Here "is" links the subject (Laura) to the emotional state of excitement.
- My birds are hungry. - The word "are" identifies that the birds currently exist in a physical state of hunger.

Determining Other Linking Verbs

In addition to true linking verbs, there are verbs that can exist either as action verbs or linking verbs. Verbs related to the five senses often function in this way. Common verbs that can function as action verbs or linking verbs include:

appear	feel
get	grow
look	prove
remain	smell
sound	stay
taste	turn

Testing for Linking Verbs

Since some linking verbs can function as either action verbs or linking verbs, how do you make the distinction? A quick and easy test is to replace the verb in the sentence that you suspect is a linking verb with a true linking verb. If the sentence still makes sense, it is a linking verb. If it isn't logical with the substitution, it's an action verb.

Take these examples:

- The flowers looked wilted. (linking verb)
- She looked for wildflowers (not a linking verb)

Substitute the linking verb "are" for the word "looked" in both sentences. The first sentence still makes sense: "The flowers are wilted." The second sentence, however, would not make sense with that substitution: "She are for wildflowers."

To further illustrate.

- The spaghetti sauce tasted delicious. (linking verb)
- She tasted the delicious spaghetti sauce. (not a linking verb)

The first sentence, "The spaghetti sauce is delicious", works, but "She is the delicious spaghetti sauce" is illogical. The verb tasted is functioning as a linking verb in the first sentence, but not in the second one.

Linking Verbs

act	acted	am	appear
appeared to be	are	are being	be
became	become	can be	come
could be	could have come	did	do
does	fall	feel	fell
felt	get	go	got
grew	grow	had	had become
had been	had seemed	has	has appeared
has become	has been	has seemed	have
have appeared	have become	have been	have seemed
indicate	is	is being	is getting
keep	look	looked	may be
might be	might have been	must	prove
remain	remained	seem	seemed
seeming	seems	shall be	shall have been
should be	should have appeared	should have been	smell
sound	stay	stayed	taste
tasted	turn	was	was being
went	were	will be	will become
will have become	will have been	will seem	would be

Source and reference

<https://www.learngrammar.net/english-grammar/linking-verbs-definition-examples-lists>

<https://youtu.be/D4UpIPQUHzA>

<https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-a-linking-verb-1691243>